



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2015

No. 32

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

We acknowledge today, O Lord, Your power, mercy, and grace. We need Your power, for the challenges we face require more than human wisdom and strength. We need Your mercy, for we transgress Your law and fall short of Your glory. We need Your grace, for we cannot offer anything to merit Your favor or gain Your love.

Empower our Senators for today's journey. Lord, give them confidence to draw near to You, that they may find grace to help them in this time of need. In an unstable world, where freedom lovers are challenged to live courageously, guide our lawmakers to be models of courage. May they send the right signals to an unstable and dangerous world.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 240.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 5, H.R. 240, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday President Obama took the extreme step of vetoing good American jobs. He sided with partisan extremists and powerful special interests over the middle class.

It says a lot about the priorities of this administration. But if the White House thinks this is the end of the new Congress's push for American jobs, it is wrong. I will soon have more to say about this and what the Senate plans to do.

For the moment, the Senate is focused on overcoming another extreme idea: the Democrats' Homeland Security filibuster to defend Executive overreach.

Many Senate Democrats led their constituents to believe they would do something about the kind of Executive overreach President Obama referred to as "unwise and unfair" and ignoring the law. Those are the words of the President of the United States. We have since heard excuses from Democrats to cover for their refusal to do so. But the time for excuses has now passed. Democrats will soon have another chance to prove they were serious.

Later this week, the Senate will consider a bill from the senior Senator from Maine that is about as reasonable as you can get. Obviously, President Obama was right to refer to the kind of overreach he took in November as ignoring the law. Senator COLLINS' sensible bill focuses simply on preventing the most egregious example of Executive overreach from taking effect. It is as simple as that.

The Collins bill is not tied to funding of DHS, either. So there are no excuses

left. Democrats should join us in voting for this commonsense legislation.

In the meantime, we have offered Democrats a chance to prove they were serious about something else, and that is funding the Department of Homeland Security.

It is really something to watch Democrats vote and block funding for this Department one day and then hold a hypocritical press conference the next. Democrats need to end their weeks-long filibuster of Homeland Security funding and end it right now.

We have continually offered them sensible opportunities to do so. Yesterday, we offered them yet another. But it will require their cooperation to achieve.

The dual-pronged approach I have outlined—allowing the Senate to stop unwise and unfair overreach on the one hand and to fund DHS through the fiscal year on the other—is a sensible way forward, but it can't be achieved without cross-partisan cooperation.

The onus continues to be on the Democratic Party to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded. Democrats can fund DHS now—not by holding more hypocritical press conferences but by ending their senseless filibuster and cooperating across the aisle.

That is what Americans expect. That is what Democrats can finally work together with us on to get done now.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the majority controlling the first half and the Democrats controlling the final half.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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